

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☒

Property Name: Frostburg Armory Inventory Number: AL-VII-047
Address: 160 S. Water Street Historic district: yes ☒ no
City: Frostburg Zip Code: 21532 County: Allegany
USGS Quadrangle(s): Frostburg
Property Owner: _____ Tax Account ID Number: _____
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 801D Tax Map Number: 0201
Project: _____ Agency: _____
Agency Prepared By: Paula S. Reed & Associates
Preparer's Name: Edie Wallace Date Prepared: 6/11/2007
Documentation is presented in: _____
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☒ Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no
Site visit by MHT Staf ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Description

The Frostburg Armory, located on the west edge of Frostburg, Maryland, was constructed by the State of Maryland in 1954. It is a two-story brick and concrete block building, facing east, with a projecting central entrance façade of cast concrete slabs. Its appearance is a greatly simplified and modernized version of the series of Maryland National Guard armories constructed throughout the state between WWI and WWII. The barrel-roof, concrete block gymnasium is located behind (west) and constructed parallel to the main front section of the building. A one-story wing stands on the west side of the gymnasium. Added in 1957, it housed a Motor Vehicle Storage area (garage) and Indoor Rifle Range and is now occupied by the City of Frostburg Public Works Department. The south end of the gymnasium has a projecting cast concrete vehicle entrance similar to the front pedestrian entrance. Both entrances have an Art Deco style molded concrete decorative frieze. Above the vehicle (south) entrance decorative frieze is inscribed "M.N.G." Both entrances have Art Deco style decorative hexagonal lighting fixtures and embedded flagstuffs on either side of the central door. The main [east] entrance has two heavy oak doors with upper glass panel windows. All windows are steel-frame casement or fixed pane windows.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended ☐
Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
MHT Comments:

Jonathan Sayer
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

8/17/07
Date

[Signature]
Reviewer, National Register Program

8/17/07
Date

200702630

The armory interior is little-changed from its original plan. The main front-central section houses the entrance hall with beige terra cotta tiled walls to a height of approximately four feet above the red terra cotta tile floor. The central hall includes restrooms on either side of the entrance and leads to the gymnasium on the west side of the building, entered by going down a set of terra cotta tiled steps to a set of double doors. Offices, a ticket booth, and concrete stairs leading to the second floor are located in the south wing of the main building, accessed through a modern glass and steel frame door. A meeting room, located in the north wing of the main building, also accessed through a modern glass and steel frame door, has pine paneling. The north wall includes a large stone fireplace. A small 1950s era kitchen is located off the south interior wall. In the concrete block gymnasium the steel framing of the barrel roof is exposed; the floor is wood. The south wall of the gymnasium has a vehicle entrance that leads outside to S. Water Street.

Behind [west] the armory building is a chain-link fenced vehicle compound with several vehical maintenance sheds and a salt dome.

History/Context

The State of Maryland, along with the other States in the Union, began a campaign of National Guard Armory building in the first decades of the 20th century - largely through the 1920s and 1930s. These iconic Medieval Castle-like buildings served the State through WWII. But following WWII, a new phase of Armory construction began as the world security situation changed dramatically. The following context is taken from the documentation of the La Plata Maryland National Guard Armory (MIHP #CH:548):

"The Maryland National Guard were important participants in World War II, gaining recognition in their participation at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. The feeling of freedom, security and prosperity that had dominated the American view after the destruction of the Nazis and Japanese was short lived and soon turned to fear and paranoia. The end of the 1940s and the beginning of the Cold War ushered in the most dangerous time during America's history, the threat of nuclear war."

"The closing moments of World War II had been the opening act of the Cold War with the detonation of the atomic bomb in Japan and the tightening grip of communism in Eastern Europe as the decade ended. The Soviet Union emerged as America's great enemy with the Iron Curtain falling over Eastern Europe and the struggle which would dominate the second half of the 20th century had begun. In response to these new threats that were on the horizon, Congress passed the National Defense Facilities Act of 1949. This act provided for 'the construction, rehabilitation, expansions, and joint utilization of buildings, structures, utilities, and other facilities, including the acquisition of land, for the reserve components of the National Military establishment of the United States.' According to testimony by Secretary of the Army, Kenneth Royall, 'No war could be won - - in fact no war could really get under way - - without many trained civilian soldiers, and the Department of the Army fully realizes how dependent we are upon our Reserve components.' "

"...With the advent of early modernism during the 1930s and 1940s, the classical influence in public building design began to wane. In an effort to purify and modernize architecture, ornament was stripped away, and traditional classical forms grew increasingly more abstract and stylized, sometimes vanishing altogether. Architectural designs by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) were characterized by simplicity of form, attention to proportion, increasingly shallow and incised relief carving, and broad, flat surfaces. Smooth stone cladding was used to create the clean and pure geometric forms which characterized the style, sometimes called the WPA Classic style, and also to achieve a greater sense of solidity and monumentality. These qualities can be seen in the La Plata [and Frostburg, Oakland, Prince Frederick, and Greenbelt] armory, with its massive stone clad entrance bays. Ornament has been reduced to stylized bands of fluting, carved in shallow relief above the entrances..."

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

~~March 2006~~

Frostburg Armory

AL-VII-047

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Frostburg Armory, built in 1954, and the other mid 20th century Maryland armories, were not constructed as WPA projects, but the designer of the buildings, Laurence P. Sangston, Principal Architect in the Maryland Department of Public Improvements in the 1950s, clearly followed the form established by earlier WPA public building projects. Sangston, in his capacity as architect for the Dept. of Public Improvements, oversaw the construction of several new armories throughout the state including Oakland Armory (MIHP #G-VI-A-103), Prince Frederick Armory (MIHP #CT-801), Greenbelt Armory (MIHP #PG:67-36), and probably the ca.1949 construction of the La Plata Armory (MIHP #CH:548).

According to the Maryland Military Department, the Frostburg Armory site "functioned as a National Guard Vehicle Storage Building from 1949 to 1954 and as a National Guard Armory from 1954 to 1979. In 1957 and addition to the armory building of 3,210 square feet was constructed and housed a new Motor Vehicle Storage area and a Rifle Range. The armory building served as office and administration space for a Maryland National Guard unit." (MMD 2006, "Modified Real Property Report" to MD Office of Planning) The Maryland National Guard vacated the Frostburg Armory in 1979 and in 1981 was occupied by the City of Frostburg Dept. of Public Works for vehical maintenance and community activities. It also serves as offices for the Bureau of Mines.

Eligibility Determination

The construction of the Maryland National Guard Armory in Frostburg, Maryland was completed in 1954; it is a significant and very intact example of the 1950s institutional architectural style and is therefore considered eligible under National Register Criterion C. Nearly identical in design and construction to the Oakland Armory and others in Greenbelt, La Plata, and Prince Frederick, the Frostburg Armory is representative of a second period of armory construction in Maryland, reflecting increasing public concern for military preparedness during the period of the Cold War. The inclusion in the design and construction of the building of a vehicle-maintenance shop and a prominent vehical entrance into the gymnasium highlights the important role that military vehicles had taken on during the intervening decades. The Frostburg Armory is therefore considered eligible under National Register Criterion A. The building was designed by architect Laurence P. Sangston, Principal Architect in the Maryland Department of Public Improvements in the 1950s, however, available information does not appear to make a case for eligibility under Criterion B. There is no evidence that the Frostburg Armory is likely to yield information important in history or prehistory and is therefore not considered eligible under Criterion D.

The Frostburg Armory was not a part of the period of significant National Guard armory construction (1901-1938) cited for the thematic National Register nomination of Maryland National Guard Armories. It does not share the architectural characteristics cited, particularly the clear reference to Medieval fortifications. As the Maryland National Guard Armories constructed during the 1950s have become more than 50 years old, it is likely that the eligibility of these buildings may merit a new survey of post-WWII armories in Maryland.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

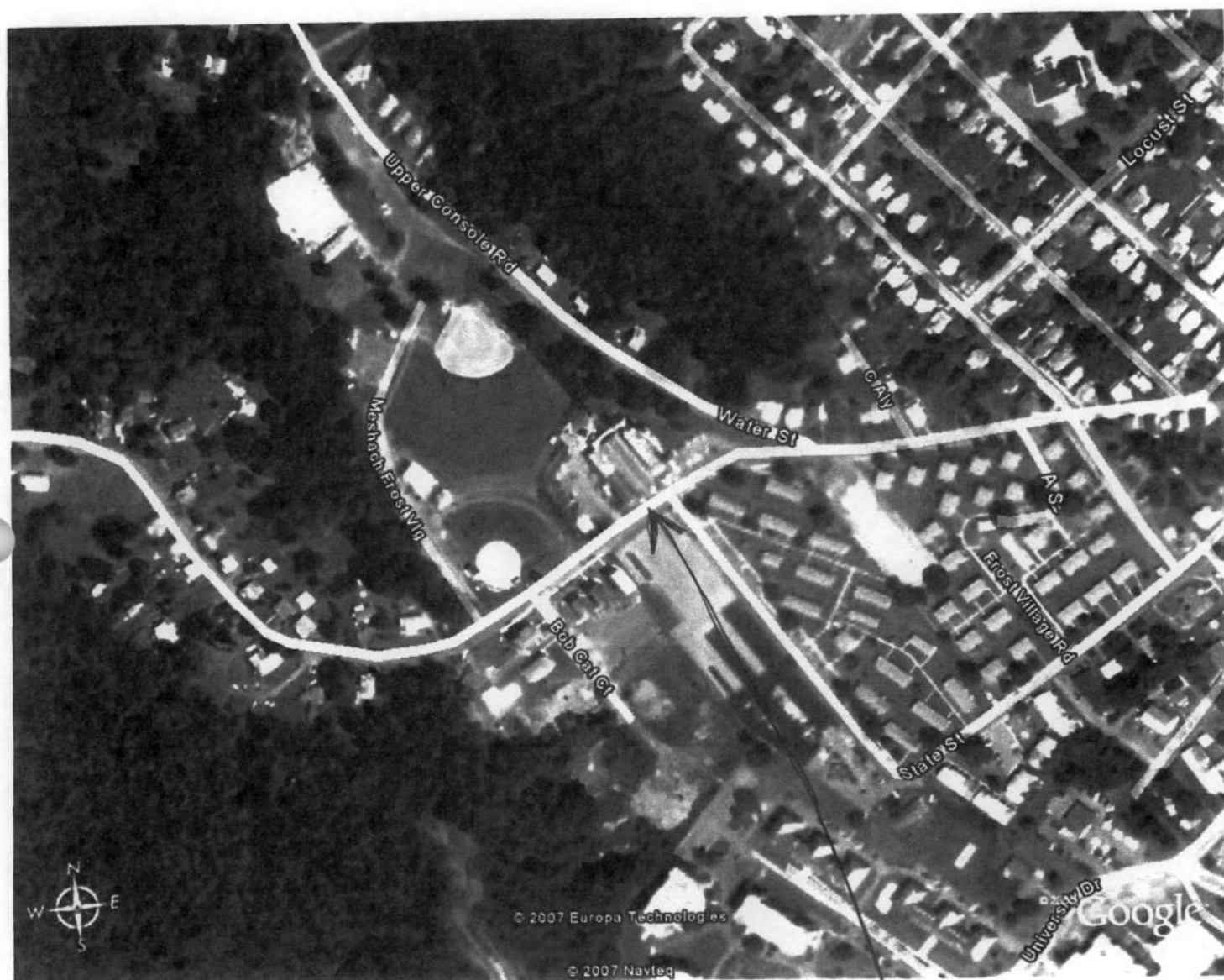
Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

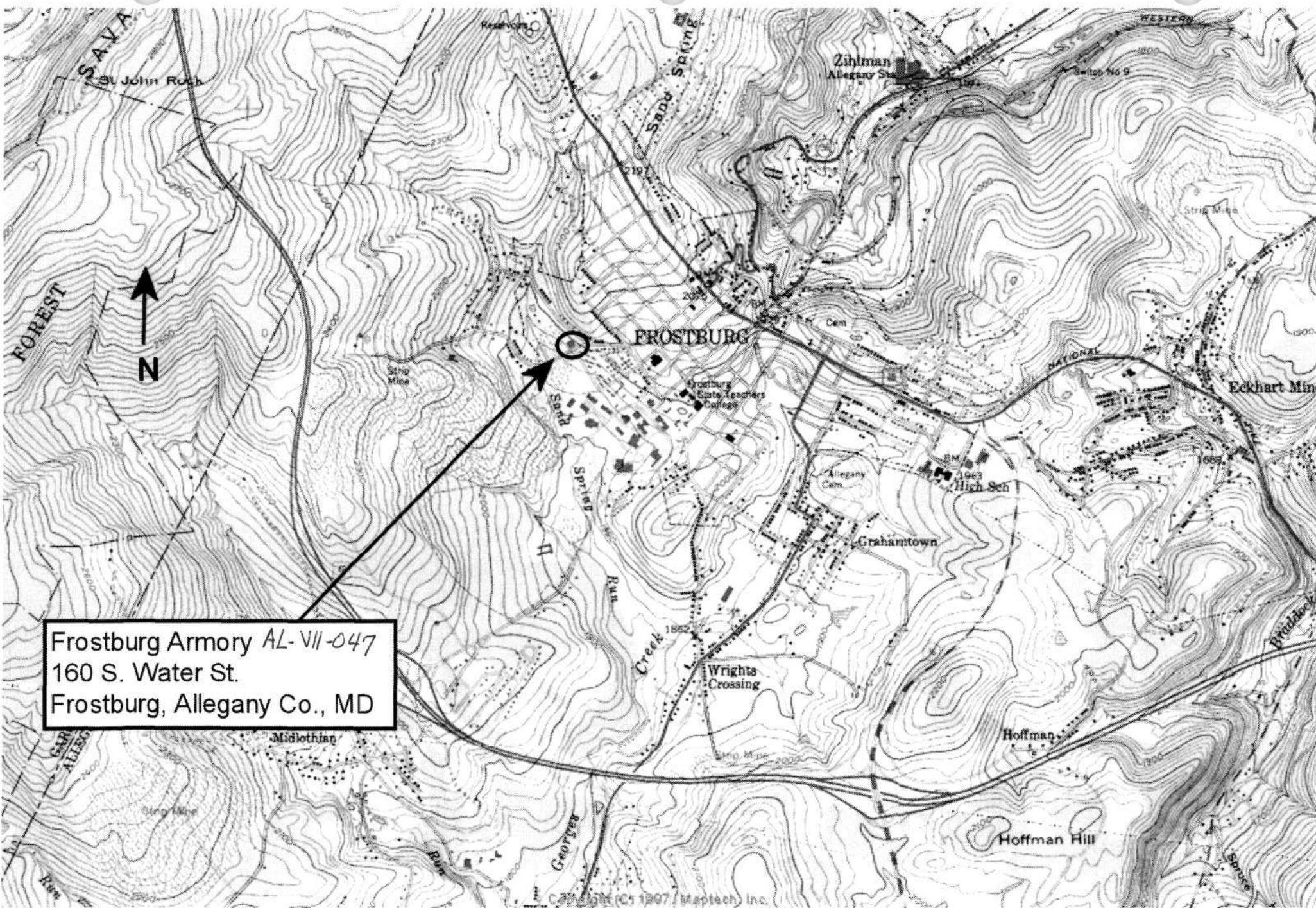
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date



FROSTBURG ARMORY
160 S. WATER ST.
FROSTBURG, MD



Frostburg Armory AL-VII-047
160 S. Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co., MD



Frostburg Armory
160 S. Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

<231400005.Jpe> 01000
2338 20 N N N N --- 2198.4/100.0

Main entrance detail

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory
160 S. Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co

6/07

P. Reed

<23140004.JPB> 008CD
2338 20 N N N N --- 2198.4/100.0

Front (~~East~~) elevation

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory
160 Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co.
6/01
P. Reed

<231400006.JPe> 012CD
2338 20 N N N N -- 2198-4/100-0

SW view
AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory
160 S. Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co.
6/07
P. Reed

<231400003.JFeb> 00600
2338 20 N N N N -- 2198.4/100.0

NW view

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 S. Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

<23140001.JFB> 002CD
2338 20 N N N N --- 2198-4/100-0

NE View

S. Elevation

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory
160 S. Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co.
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P. Reed

<23140007.Jpe> 014CD
2338 20 N N N N-- 2198.4/1000

Main entrance, light detail
AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co.

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R. Reel

<23148812.Jpe> 024CD

2338 28 N N N N-- 2198.4/100.0

NE view W. elevation, Garage

AL-VII-047



M. N. G.

HOWELL

181-315

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Frostburg Armory

160 S. Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

S. Elevation, Entrance

<23140002.Jpe> 004CD

2338 20 N N N --- 2198.4/100.0

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St

Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

<23140011.Jpe> 0220D
2338 20 N N N N - 2190.4/100.9

NW view, Shed, parking area

~~AL-047~~

AL-VII-047

FROSTBURG
RECREATION AND PARKS
DEPARTMENT



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

<231400008.Jpe> 016CD
2339 20 N N N N --- 2198.4/100.0

Interior, entrance to gym

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St.

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P. Reed

<23140013.JFB> 02600

2338 20 N N N N-- - 2198.4/100.0

Parlor/meeting room

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St.

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P. Reed

<231400009.Jfb> 018CD

2338 20 N N N N --- 2198.4/100.0

Gym

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory
1160 Water St.
Frostburg, Allegany Co.

6/07

P. Reed

<23140010.Jrb> 02000
2338 20 N N N N --- 21954/10000

Interior Corridor

AL-VII-047



Frostburg Armory

160 Water St.

Frostburg, Allegany Co,

6/07

P. Reed

<23140014.Jpeg> 02800

2338 29 N N N N-- 2198 4/100-0

Kitchen, 1st floor

AK-VII-047